

# Overview: Michigan CDL Skills Test

## CDL Skills Test Requirements and Overview

Before taking the CDL skills test, you must:

- ✓ Meet driving record eligibility requirements, pass all required vision and CDL written tests and obtain a CDL Temporary Instruction Permit (TIP).
- ✓ Contact any approved third party driver skills test organization to schedule your CDL skills test. **Ask about the third party CDL skills test fee policy when you schedule your exam.** Your local Secretary of State branch office has information about test site locations in your area.
- ✓ Show the third party driver skills test organization your valid Michigan photo driver license and Medical Examiner's Certificate (commonly known as a DOT card or School Bus card) or medical waiver.
- ✓ Provide a test vehicle(s) with a GVWR representative of the type you plan to drive.
  - Vehicles and trailers used for the CDL skills tests **must be empty** and meet the equipment and safety inspection requirements of the Michigan and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.
  - Vehicles must include a seat equipped with a safety belt for both the driver and examiner. Buses are not required to have safety belts for the examiner.
  - Vehicles and trailers used for the CDL skills tests must have a valid registration and proof of insurance.
  - Vehicles used for testing must be able to travel at safe and legal highway speeds.
- ✓ Pay the CDL third party skills tests fee.
- ✓ After passing the CDL skills test, receive a Michigan Department of State Driver Skills Test Certificate (TPT-010) only from the approved third party driver skills test organization. Third party organizations are prohibited from releasing any other test documentation except the skills test certificate.
- ✓ Take the skills test certificate directly to any SOS branch office to receive your full privilege CDL. You must redeem your certificate within one (1) year from date of issuance. After one year, you must take all CDL tests again.
- ✓ Pay a correction fee to add the CDL privileges to your license and obtain your temporary CDL.
- ✓ Receive your photo CDL in the mail within about ten (10) business days.

The CDL skills test consists of three separate tests. They are administered in the following order:

- ✓ The Vehicle Inspection Test.
- ✓ The Off-Road Basic Control Skills Test.
- ✓ The On-Road Driving Test.

Each test must be passed before continuing on to the next test. A failure of any one of the CDL skills tests terminates testing. On subsequent attempts, you must start over from the beginning of the test (vehicle inspection test) regardless of which test you failed. You are allowed one (1) attempt per day.

During the tests, you will be evaluated on your knowledge and skills. **Do not** be concerned when the examiner marks the scoring form, since it does not necessarily mean you have done anything wrong.

Sections 11-13 outlines the criteria which will be used to evaluate your knowledge and skills.

## Third Party Driver Skills Test Administration:

In Michigan, state or federal laws mandate all driver testing. The Department of State administers driver knowledge (written) tests only through a branch office. Driver road test services are provided only through a privatized third party testing program. This program utilizes a statewide network of public and private organizations certified by the Department to conduct the driver skills tests. The Department is committed to assuring that driver tests (both written and skills) are given by qualified persons trained to administer the tests in a fair, honest and a reliable manner.

Applicants should know the test procedures and time involved for each class of driver skills test. The following study guides are available at any Secretary of State branch office. Each study guide contains the required elements for each test type:

- ✓ **Road Skills Test Study Guide** (SOS-360, automobile tests)
- ✓ **Motorcycle Operator Manual** (SOS-116, motorcycle tests)
- ✓ **Commercial Driver License Manual** (TS-004, bus and truck tests)

Drivers should question any skills test that does not include all the test components as described in the appropriate study guide. Following is a table that shows the required skills test elements and approximate times needed for each test type. The allotted times are estimated minimums based on an average length driving route, good weather conditions, light traffic and a well-prepared driver. Skills tests must have all the segments listed below and may take longer, but not take significantly less time to complete.

TEST TYPE	VEHICLE INSPECTION	BASIC CONTROL SKILLS	DRIVING TEST	TOTAL TIME
Motorcycle	5 minutes (not scored)	10 minutes (scored)	N/A	15 minutes
Automobile	5 minutes (not scored)	10 minutes (scored)	30 minutes (scored)	45 minutes
CDL Group A	50 minutes (scored)	20 minutes (scored)	50 minutes (scored)	2 hours
CDL Group B	30 minutes (scored)	20 minutes (scored)	40 minutes (scored)	1 hour 30 minutes
CDL Group C	20 minutes (scored)	20 minutes (scored)	40 minutes (scored)	1 hour 20 minutes

### TEST TYPE VEHICLE INSPECTION BASIC CONTROL SKILLS DRIVING TEST TOTAL TIME

**During the test, certified examiners must always:**

- ✓ Read standard instructions for each part of the test (a list of instructions is provided for this purpose).
- ✓ Use only Department approved forms and test procedures.
- ✓ Use only Department approved off-street exercises and on-street driving test routes.

Any third party organization or examiner who intentionally misrepresents a driver skills test by omitting any driver testing requirement or procedure or participates in any illegal activity related to driver licensing, is subject to severe penalties including loss of the testing certification, criminal prosecution and restitution for monetary damages to the test applicant and/or the Department.

Any person (not limited to the driver applicant) who knowingly encourages, facilitates or participates in improper, illegal or fraudulent driver testing is also subject to criminal prosecution.

Any person found to have been improperly, illegally or fraudulently tested must take the test(s) again. The applicant or third party organization will be liable for the costs associated with retesting.

**Improper, fraudulent or unlawful driver license tests result in illegal license applications.** The **Michigan Vehicle Code** (P.A. 300 of 1949) includes the following language concerning illegal driver testing:

- ✓ A person who makes a false certification regarding any driver license application is guilty of a felony.
- ✓ A person who bribes or attempts to corrupt a person or agency that conducts a driving test under an agreement entered into with the Secretary of State with the intent to influence the opinion or decision of the person or agency conducting the driving test is guilty of a felony.
- ✓ A designated examining officer appointed or designated by the secretary of state who conducts a driving test under an agreement entered into with the Secretary of State and who varies from, shortens, or in any other way changes the method or examination criteria prescribed under that agreement is guilty of a felony.
- ✓ A person who forges, counterfeits, or alters a driving test certification issued by a designated examining officer appointed or designated by the Secretary of State is guilty of a felony.

A felony committed under these laws shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one year nor more than five years and fines up to \$5,000.00 for the first offense. Subsequent convictions result in additional penalties.

### **Third Party Test Organization Business Requirements:**

Third party test organizations must adhere to certain business practices and administer road skills tests according to established standards and procedures contained in a formal, legal agreement with the Department. Among many contract requirements, third party test organizations must:

- ✓ Be approved by the Department before testing services are offered.
- ✓ Maintain an established place of business and obtain written permission to use all approved test sites.
- ✓ Display a sign with the test organization name at all approved test sites.
- ✓ Respond to all driver testing service inquiries within (24) hours (excluding weekends and holidays).
- ✓ Publish a printed fee policy and provide receipts (actual fees are not regulated by law).
- ✓ Accept personal checks and maintain a surety bond if deposits are collected.
- ✓ Ensure examiners pass all required training and obtain Department certification before giving tests.
- ✓ Require examiners adhere to Department dress code standards and display Department approved photo identification during tests.

### **Reporting Improper, Illegal or Fraudulent Test Activities:**

Improper, illegal or fraudulent driver testing activity should be reported immediately to the Michigan Department of State. Information needed includes the name(s) of the person(s) and organization(s) involved, the date(s) of the incident(s) and a detailed description of the activity observed or discussed. All legitimate reports will be investigated. **A written statement may be required.** The information should be submitted to:

**Michigan Department of State  
Program Operations Division  
PO Box 30640  
Lansing, MI 48909-8140  
Phone (517) 241-6888 Fax (517) 241-6852**

**Sections 11, 12 and 13 are for drivers who  
need to take the CDL skills tests.**